

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ATHENS 00909 01 OF 02 121622Z

45

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01

PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 IO-14

EUR-25 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 004860

R 121525Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2457

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 0909

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT GR

SUBJ: EM-PM MARKEZINIS: "ONLY SOLUTION THEN AND NOW IS
ELECTIONS"

1. SUMMARY. I INVITED EX-PM MARKEZINIS TO LUNCH
FEBRUARY 11 TO EXCHANGE VIEWS ON HIS PERIOD AS PRIME
MINISTER (OCTOBER 8-NOVEMBER 25, 1973) AND PRESENT SITUATION.
IT PROVIDED ME OPPORTUNITY TO REITERATE THE SIGNIFICANCE
WE ATTACH TO POLITICAL NORMALIZATION AS FORMULATED IN
MARKEZINIS EXPERIMENT AND TO REGISTER OUR DEEP CONCERN OVER
PRESENT SITUATION. MARKEZINIS REAFFIRMED HIS COMMITMENT TO
ELECTIONS AS ONLY LEGITIMATE BASIS FOR GOVERNMENT AND
EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT RECEIVED FROM THE
AMERICAN EMBASSY DURING HIS 48 DAYS IN POWER. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING COURSE OF INFORMAL LUNCHEON, SPYROS MARKEZINIS
UNDERScoreD REPEATEDLY THAT ONLY SOLUTION FOR GREECE
IS RETURN TO POLITICAL NORMALITY THROUGH ELECTIONS.
HE SAID THAT WAS HIS BELIEF LAST JUNE WHEN THEN PRIME
MINISTER PAPADOPOULOS APPROACHED HIM WITH SUGGESTION
THAT HE ASSUME PREMIERSHIP IN PROCESS OF RESTORATION
OF POLITICAL GOVERNMENT AND HE BELIEVES IT NOW TO BE
ONLY VIABLE ALTERNATIVE TO PRESENT SITUATION. MARKEZINIS
POINTED OUT A GOVERNMENT BASED ON POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY
OWNES AN APOLOGY TO NO ONE AND ITS ACTS ENJOY PERMANENT

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ATHENS 00909 01 OF 02 121622Z

VALIDITY. HE SAID HE WAS PARTICULARLY MINDFUL OF

ELECTIONS TODAY SINCE HE HAD COUNSELED PAPADOPOULOS LAST OCTOBER TO SCHEDULE ELECTIONS ON FEBRUARY 10 DESPITE LATTER'S ASKING FOR A DELAY. MARKEZINIS RECALLED THAT HE HAD WARNED PAPADOPOULOS THAT POSTPONING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS WOULD RUN RISK OF POLITICALLY UNFAVORABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF ECONOMIC TURNDOWN, STRIKES, STUDENT PROTESTS WHICH WOULD ENGENDER DEMAND FROM SOME QUARTERS OF GOG FOR MARTIAL LAW.

3. MARKEZINIS SAID WHILE HE WAS WILLING TO SACRIFICE EVERYTHING FOR ELECTIONS AND HAD COURAGE AS POLITICIAN TO TAKE STAND TO BRING ABOUT ELECTORAL PROCESS, OTHER POLITICAL FIGURES HELD BACK AND REFUSED TO COOPERATE. MARKEZINIS QUERIED RHETORICALLY HOW COULD RESPONSIBLE POLITICAL LEADER SUCH AS EX-PM P. KANELLOPOULOS REFUSE EVEN TO ISCUSS THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS WITH HIM. MARKEZINIS EXPLAINED NEXT VOLUME OF HIS CONTEMPORARY HISTORY OF GREECE WOULD PROVIDE DETAILS OF HIS PERIOD AS PM, BUT HE WANTED ME TO KNOW THAT AT HIS PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED IMMEDIATELY AFTER NOVEMBER 25, DAY OF MILITARY COUP, HE HAD INTENDED TO ANNOUNCE DATE FOR ELECTIONS, RESTORATION OF CITIZENSHIP FOR DIVESTED GREEK NATIONALS, MELINA MERCOURI, FORMER ATHENS MAYOR PLYTAS, A. PAPANDREOU AND 28 OTHERS, AND COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROGRAM. MARKEZINIS OBSERVED THAT PAPADOPOULOS DURING THOSE MONTHS WAS MAN DRAINED OF ENERGY, DISILLUSIONED WITH HIS COLLEAGUES IN POWER, AND SOUGHT WAY OUT WITH DIGNITY. MARKEZINIS RECALLED THAT HE HAD WARNED PAPADOPOULOS THAT BGEN IOANNIDES POSED THREAT DURING SUMMER MONTHS, BUT PAPADOPOULOS FAILED TO ASSESS ACCURATELY REAL DANGER AND THOUGHT HE COULD ESCAPE SUCH THREAT AS HE HAD PREVIOUSLY. MARKEZINIS SAID HIS INTERPRETATION OF EVENTS LEADING UP TO NOVEMBER 25 COUP SUGGESTS PAPADOPOULOS AND CABINET LACKED INFORMATION ON WHAT ACTUALLY TRANSPIRED AT POLYTECHNION (NOVEMBER 16-17) AND PAPADOPOULOS' BELATED REALIZATION OF HIS OWN INCREASED ALIENATION FROM GREEK ARMY. MOREOVER THE FORMER PRESIDENT APPARENTLY HESITATED TO PRESENT TO MARKEZINIS FULL BACKGROUND ON

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ATHENS 00909 01 OF 02 121622Z

POLYTECHNION RIOTS FOR FEAR MARKEZINIS WOULD RESIGN.
TASCA

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 ATHENS 00909 02 OF 02 121659Z

41

ACTION NEA-13

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 NSC-10 SPC-03 SAM-01 SS-20 RSC-01

PRS-01 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 L-03 IO-14

EUR-25 DRC-01 /110 W

----- 004394

R 121525Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2461

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 ATHENS 0909

4. FORMER PM SAID PRESENT SITUATION WAS GOING FROM BAD TO WORSE. HE SAID HE WAS SO PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE HE WOULD CONSIDER LEAVING GREECE IF HE COULD (A RECURRING THEME IN PRESENT DAY ATHENS). THE ONLY SOLUTION IS NATIONAL ELECTIONS, PERHAPS TO ELECT CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY WHOSE FIRST TASK WOULD BE TO STRUCTURE NEW CONSTITUTION. HE SAID DURING HIS 48 DAYS AS PM GREECE ENJOYED FREEDOM AT ITS BEST; NOW FREEDOM IS AT ITS NADIR. MARKEZINIS TOLD ME HE HAS NEVER MET BGEN. DIMITRIOS IOANNIDES. HE OFFERED AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF BGEN. IOANNIDES' INEPTNESS LATTER'S ALLEGED JUDGMENT THAT THE NATIONAL ECONOMY WAS PROGRESSING SMOOTHLY AND THAT THASSOS OIL EXPLORATIONS WOULD RESOLVE CURRENT ENERGY CRISIS FOR GREECE.

5. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY WHETHER HE FELT LET DOWN BY EX-PRESIDENT PAPADOPOULOS, MARKEZINIS SAID PAPADOPOULOS HAD BEEN HONEST WITH HIM ALWAYS AND HAD GRANTED MARKEZINIS THE CONDITIONS HE SOUGHT INCLUDING AUTHORITY FOR FOREIGN POLICY, PRESS, AND NATIONAL ECONOMY. TO THE EXTENT THAT PAPADOPOULOS FAILED TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC ORDER AND SECURITY ESSENTIAL FOR HOLDING ELECTIONS, MARKEZINIS SAID HE THOUGHT PAPADOPOULOS HIMSELF MAY NOT HAVE HAD ALL THE BACKGROUND ON POLYTECHNION RIOTS OR PERHAPS WAS BETRAYED BY HIS OWN COLLEAGUES IN CLASSIC CAESAR/BRUTUS FASHION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ATHENS 00909 02 OF 02 121659Z

6. TURNING TO SECURITY MATTERS, MARKEZINIS SAID GREECE AND U.S. ARE LINKED IN VITAL AND MUTUALLY SUSTAINING DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP. IN HIS VIEW U.S. DEPENDENCY ON GREECE (SPECIFICALLY CRETE, PIRAEUS, AND ATTICA) WAS ILLUSTRATED IN OCTOBER MIDDLE EAST WAR. MARKEZINIS RECALLED THAT HE HAD MADE THIS SAME POINT TO PRESIDENT EISENHOWER IN 1953 BY STRESSING THAT GREECE WITH PARLIAMENTARY ENDORSEMENT MUST MAKE AVAILABLE TO U.S. ARMED FORCES BASES AND FACILITIES. I EXPLAINED THAT IN MY JUDGMENT GREECE'S SECURITY EPENDS UPON THREE ELEMENTS: ITS OWN ARMED FORCES, THE 6TH FLEET, AND U.S. WITH NATO AUGMENTED FORCES. I ALSO MADE POINT THAT QUESTION OF GOG'S SEEKING ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY U.S. WOULD PAY FOR FACILITIES WOULD NOT SQUARE WELL WITH USG NOR CORRESPOND TO SPIRIT OF GREEK NATO COMMITMENTS. I COMMENTED THAT AMERICANS DON'T RESPOND BENIGNLY TO PRESSURE; A STRAIGHTFORWARD PLEA FOR ASSISTANCE WITHOUT LINKUP TO FACILITIES WOULD CREATE A BETTER ATMOSPHERE.

7. OUR CONVERSATION TERMINATED WITH MARKEZINIS EMPHASIZING ONCE AGAIN THAT ONLY EXITFROM PRESENT SITUATION WAS THROUGH FREE ELECTIONS. HE DERIDED PROPOSAL OF NATIONAL FRONT SINCE GREEKS WOULD NEVER AGREE ON WHO WOULD BE INCLUDED AND DIRECTION OF POLICY. WE AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH AND TO CONTINUE EXCHANGING VIEWS ON MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN.

8. MARKEZINIS APPEARED AS EBULLIENT AND FRIENDLY AS EVER. HE IS PROUD OF THE HISTORY OF MODERN GREECE HE IS WRITING AND THE ROLE HE PLAYED IN IT. TASCA

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, EXILES, NATIONAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ATHENS00909
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: ATHENS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740240/aaaabliv.tel
Line Count: 200
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2002 by ifshinsr>; APPROVED <02 JAN 2003 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EM-PM MARKEZINIS: "ONLY SOLUTION THEN AND NOW IS ELECTIONS"
TAGS: PINT, GR, (MARKEZINIS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005